

VAWA/HOPWA Project Demonstration NOFA FAQ's

FR-5900-N-11

Eligibility

Q. Are housing assistance and supportive services only available to women under this funding opportunity?

A. No. Housing assistance and supportive services provided under the VAWA/HOPWA Project Demonstration will be available to any eligible beneficiary regardless of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, familial status, marital status, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or age. Eligible beneficiaries are low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS who are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking. Eligible beneficiaries include men and women, including transgender men and women.

Q. A nonprofit AIDS services organization has experience providing housing services for people living with HIV/AIDS. In addition to comprehensive case management services for persons living with HIV/AIDS, they provide referrals to local domestic violence and sexual assault service providers, as needed. The organization does not have a tailored program to address sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, nor is this part of their organization's mission statement. For this grant, they would contract with leading local domestic violence and sexual assault organizations to serve as project sponsors in order to strengthen the supportive services provided to victims and to improve cross-agency partnerships in our community.

Would HUD consider these referral services enough to meet the threshold eligibility requirements for non-profit applicants?

A. No, providing referrals to local domestic violence and sexual assault organizations for clients as needed would not show that an organization has a history of effective work concerning sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking. A history of effective work should include services that were specifically designed to address the needs of victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, and shows expertise in the working with one of the four crimes. This organization would not meet the nonprofit applicant threshold requirements for history of effective work. However, it is possible for the organization to serve as a project sponsor of a state or unit of local government that receives funding through the demonstration under the HOPWA grant.

Q. A nonprofit, eligible under both HOPWA and Transitional Housing Assistance Programs, is applying as the grantee. The applicant intends to use other local nonprofits as project sponsors, but the organizations do not meet the eligibility requirements for both programs. Can a project sponsor that meets one program's eligibility requirements just provide activities under that funding stream?

A. Project sponsors only need to meet eligibility requirements for the funding stream they are receiving. If they are only providing a HOPWA housing activity, they only need to meet eligibility requirements for HOPWA funding. All project sponsors receiving Transitional Housing Assistance Program funds must submit an MOU. Project sponsors that will be funded only through the HOPWA grant component of the demonstration are not required to submit an MOU.

Budget

Q. Is the maximum funding amount, \$1.3 million, for all three years or each year of the grant?

A. The maximum funding amount is the total for all three years of the grant. Applicants will need to show how they will use the total funding amount for each year of the 36-month grant period in their submitted budgets.

Q. The NOFA states that funds can be requested for Resource Identification. Will funds used for Resource Identification contribute to the HOPWA minimums or maximums? For example, if \$450,000 was requested for housing support and \$50,000 was requested for Resource Identification, would the HOPWA minimum of \$500,000 be met?

A. An application that requests less than \$500,000 for Housing Assistance activities is not consistent with the NOFA requirements. Amounts requested for Resource Identification do not count toward the \$500,000 required minimum request amount for Housing Assistance activities. Section II.C (“Minimum/Maximum Award Information”) of the NOFA provides that the minimum/maximum amounts of a HOPWA grant award under the demonstration are \$500,000 and \$1.1 million, respectively. Funds used for Resource Identification count toward these amounts. Separately, however, Section III.C.4.b.(1) (“HOPWA Activities”) provides that applicants must request a minimum of \$500,000 for Housing Assistance activities. Housing Assistance includes Facility Operations, TBRA, STRMU, Permanent Housing Placement, and Other Housing Costs. Resource Identification is not a Housing Assistance activity. Therefore, any amounts requested for Resource Identification must be in addition to at least \$500,000

requested for Housing Assistance activities. Applicants have the option to request up to \$300,000 in Resource Identification. There is no minimum for Resource Identification.

Programmatic Requirements

Q. Will rents need to meet both Fair Market Rent (FMR) and/or Rent Reasonableness criteria for the area?

A. Rental assistance activities under the demonstration will be funded through the HOPWA award and must follow HOPWA regulations, including the rent standard and rent reasonableness standard at 24 CFR 574.320, and the resident rent payment standard at 24 CFR 574.310.

Q. What are the criteria for documenting domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking for program participants? Are survivors who do not report their incidents to the police eligible for services?

A. An eligible beneficiary under the demonstration is a low-income person living with HIV/AIDS that is a victim of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, as those terms are defined at 42 USC § 13925(a) and in the NOFA. The NOFA does not prescribe specific criteria for how potential beneficiaries demonstrate that they are victims of such crimes. Grantees should have procedures on how to determine whether a potential beneficiary has been a victim of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking. Grantees must not adopt restrictive conditions that would go against the program requirements for victim safety and recovery, Section III.C.2.b.(2). More specifically from that section:

Grant recipients must not engage in or conduct activities that compromise victim safety or recovery. The following activities have been found to jeopardize victim safety, deter or prevent physical or emotional healing for victims, or allow offenders to escape responsibility for their actions:

- *Requiring survivors to meet restrictive conditions in order to receive services (e.g., the decision to seek a protection order or counseling is a choice that should be reserved to the victim, and should not be a precondition to services); background checks of victims; or clinical evaluations to determine eligibility for services[.]*

Q. Are legal services eligible supportive services under this funding opportunity?

A. Supportive services will be funded through the Transitional Housing Assistance Program grants under this demonstration. As such, the rules of that program apply to the supportive service funds. Grant funds for supportive service activities may fund legal services that are necessary for a victim of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking to locate and secure permanent housing, and to integrate into a community. This might include legal services regarding housing, protection orders, and limited immigration matters that affect a victim's ability to obtain housing (such as U-visas), as may be appropriate under the circumstances. Funds under this grant program may not be used for comprehensive, long-term legal assistance, such as divorce or child custody.

Q. Housing information services is listed as an eligible activity in HOPWA regulations at 24 CFR 574.300(b)(1), but not specifically listed in the NOFA. Is housing information services an eligible activity under the VAWA/HOPWA Project Demonstration?

A. Yes, housing information services is an eligible HOPWA activity under the VAWA/HOPWA Project Demonstration. Housing information services include counseling, information, and referral services to assist an eligible person to locate, acquire, finance, and maintain housing.

Application Submission

Q. Are project sponsors for the HOPWA award required to submit a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

A. Project sponsors that will be funded only through HOPWA grant component of the demonstration are not required to submit an MOU. However, a letter of commitment may be needed if the Resource ID Budget line item is being used, or resources are being leveraged.

Q. Do application documents have to be attached in a specific order? Grants.gov indicates to "Please attach your files in the proper sequence. See the appropriate Agency Guidelines for details." However, there are no guidelines listed for attachment order.

A. HUD did not provide a listing order, but applicants should use the checklist at the end of the NOFA, Section VIII. Other Information, as a guideline to ensure all necessary documents have been submitted.

Q. For the Letters of Commitment, some partners are providing services that do not have a dollar value associated with them, for example, assisting with recruiting participants. How do you determine a dollar value for these partners?

A. If a non-monetary service is being provided and does not have an exact direct dollar value associated with it, or it is an in-kind contribution, a reasonable dollar value for the activity should be calculated and provided in the Letters of commitment. For example, the organization may use volunteers, and their roles may be the equivalent of a paid role at \$10/hr. Then 100 volunteer hours would be the equivalent of \$1,000. The dollar amount listed in the Letters of commitment should be a reasonable estimate of the value of the non-monetary or other in-kind contribution.

**For the full text of the VAWA/HOPWA Project Demonstration NOFA visit Grants.gov at
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=278647>**